# Fantasy Football, Flash Mobs and Fan Fiction: Pop Culture Programming in Your Library

Melissa Rabey

dettiot@gmail.com

http://bit.ly/popcultureprogramming

## Agenda

- Why Offer Pop Culture Programming?
- Some Sample Programs
- Q&A

### Getting to Know You

- What kind of library do you work in?
- What audience do you work with?
- Have you offered pop culture programming at your library?

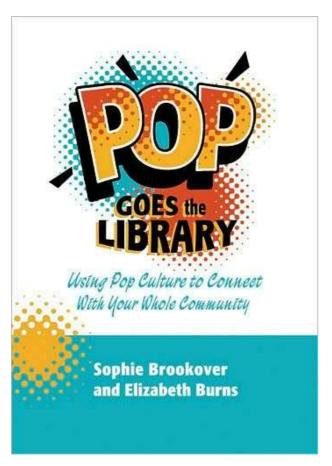
## What is Pop Culture Programming?

 Pop culture programming means offering events and activities that relate to movies, music, TV shows, books and other mass media entertainment that your patrons are enjoying.

## Libraries and Pop Culture

 More than ever, libraries have embraced pop culture. By collecting popular works, libraries demonstrate that there is a place for entertainment and fun in life and in libraries.

## Why Offer Pop Culture Programming?



"We view programming as the ultimate expression of our pop culture philosophy, because programs showcase your collections and services and integrate them with events that reach out to and bring together members of your community."

Sophie Brookover and Liz Burns, **Pop Goes the Library** (page 151)

## Why Offer Pop Culture Programming?

- It creates new communities, using your library as their home.
- It allows you to connect programming to all parts of your collection, going beyond book clubs.
- It's fun!

## **Creating Communities**

 At a time when it's easier than ever to have interests that aren't shared by your family or friends, pop culture programming allows like-minded individuals to find each other within the community.

## Collections and Programming

 Books, DVDs and CDs aren't just for information and entertainment: they can create a shared network of fans within your library's community.

#### Fun for All

- Patrons have stressful lives. Pop culture programming lets them have an enjoyable hour in their day.
- Libraries are usually considered places for learning. But we're also places of entertainment.

#### **Potential Problems**

- Copyright
- Technology

## Copyright

- Are pop culture programs plagiarism or infringement?
- Be aware of fair use provisions.
- Pop culture programs fall into an undefined legal area.

## **Technology**

- Be aware of what your technology can do.
- Become friendly with your systems department or the computer geeks on staff.
- Look for ways to go low-tech.
- Have a backup plan.

## Some Sample Programs

Fan Fiction

#### What is Fan Fiction?

 "Welcome to the world of fanfiction, where fans create stories using characters, settings, and events from their favorite books, movies, or television shows."

Elizabeth Burns and Carlie Webber, "When Harry Met Bella". School Library Journal, August 2009.

### Stories For Anyone

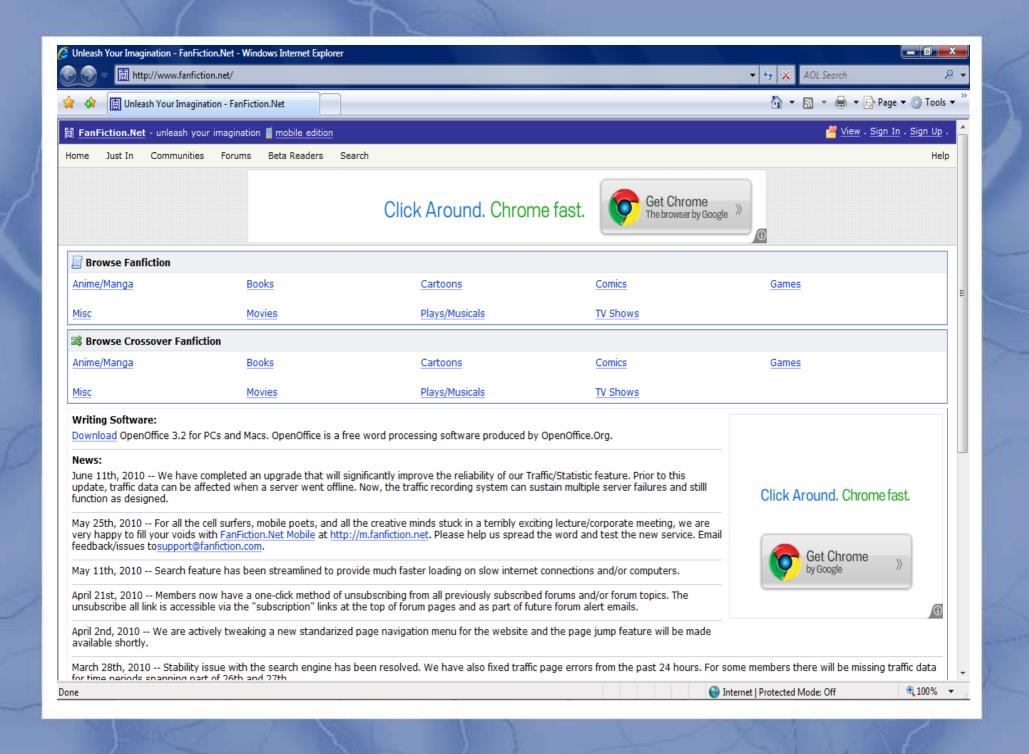
 The great appeal of fan fiction is that it can be applied to any story that's been previously created.

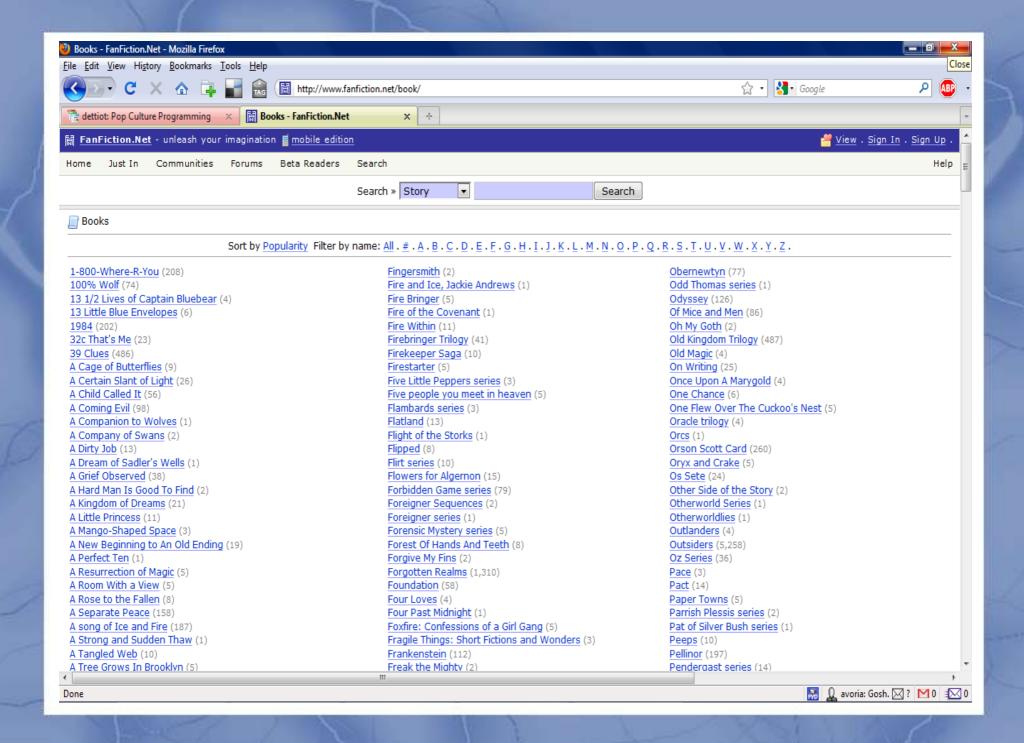
#### Fan Fiction Source Material

- Movies
- TV Shows
- Books
- Comic Books
- Anime/Manga
- Video Games

#### Fan Fiction Source Material

- Mythology
- Wrestling
- Plays/Musicals
- Cartoons





### Sample Fan Fiction Programs

- Writing workshop, using fan fiction techniques such as writing drabbles or crossovers
- Internet safety program, based around sharing patrons' already-written fan fiction
- Learning teamwork by collaborating on a short fan fiction

## Fan Fiction Writing Workshop

- Explain that this workshop lets patrons work on writing skills other than creating characters.
- Ask patrons to list books, TV shows, movies or other stories that they've particularly enjoyed—and have been left wondering "What happened next?"

## Fan Fiction Writing Workshop

- Pass around paper and pencils, or allow patrons to use computers.
- Have patrons write a drabble, a 100-word story, about the characters. Provide prompts or suggestions in case patrons are stuck/seem hesitant.
- Encourage patrons to read aloud their work and receive critique.

## Fan Fiction Writing Workshop

- Let patrons write more drabbles, if time permits.
- Talk about how they can experiment with description, plotting, or voice in their stories.

## Why Fan Fiction?

- It allows reluctant or hesitant writers to experiment in a non-threatening way.
- It helps writers develop new skills or improve weak technique.
- It speaks to a universal desire to fall into a story and have more time with the characters and situations.

#### Unsure?

- You don't have to be an expert in Harry Potter, Stephanie Plum or Star Trek to present this kind of program.
- You don't even have to call it fan fiction.

## Some Sample Programs

Fantasy Football

## What is Fantasy Football?

 "Fantasy Football is a fantasy sports game in which participants (called "owners") are arranged into a competitive league, earning "fantasy points" by using the statistics of real football players."

"Fantasy Football", Wikipedia. (Accessed July 25, 2010)

## Playing Fantasy Football

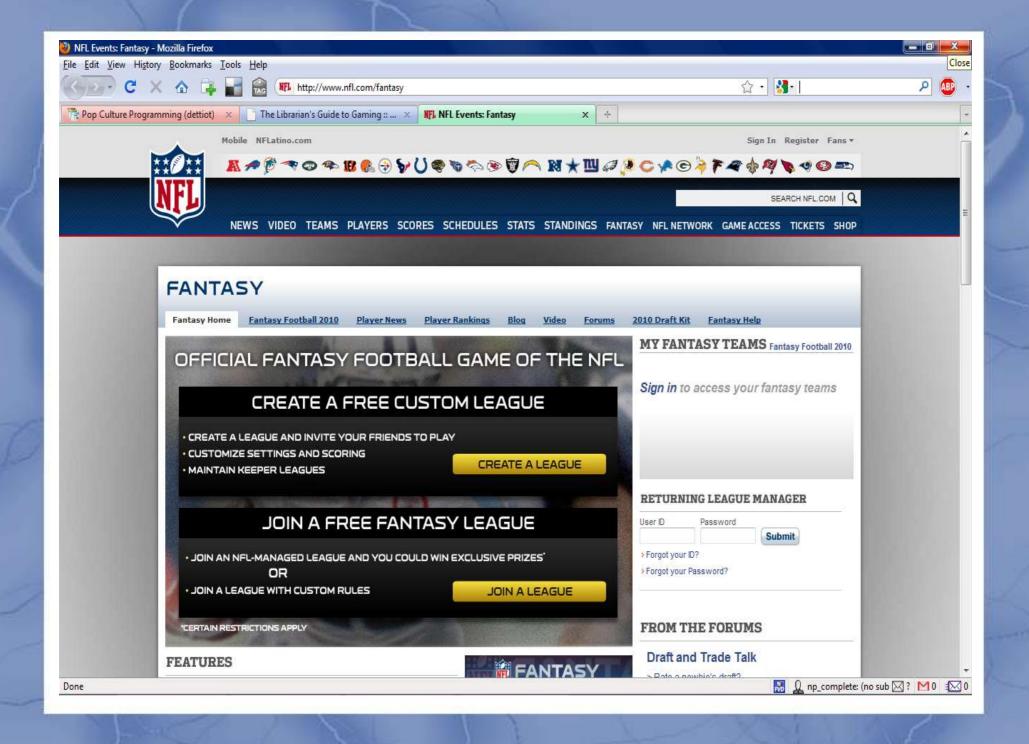
 It is believed that more people play fantasy football than World of Warcraft, and that players number in the millions.

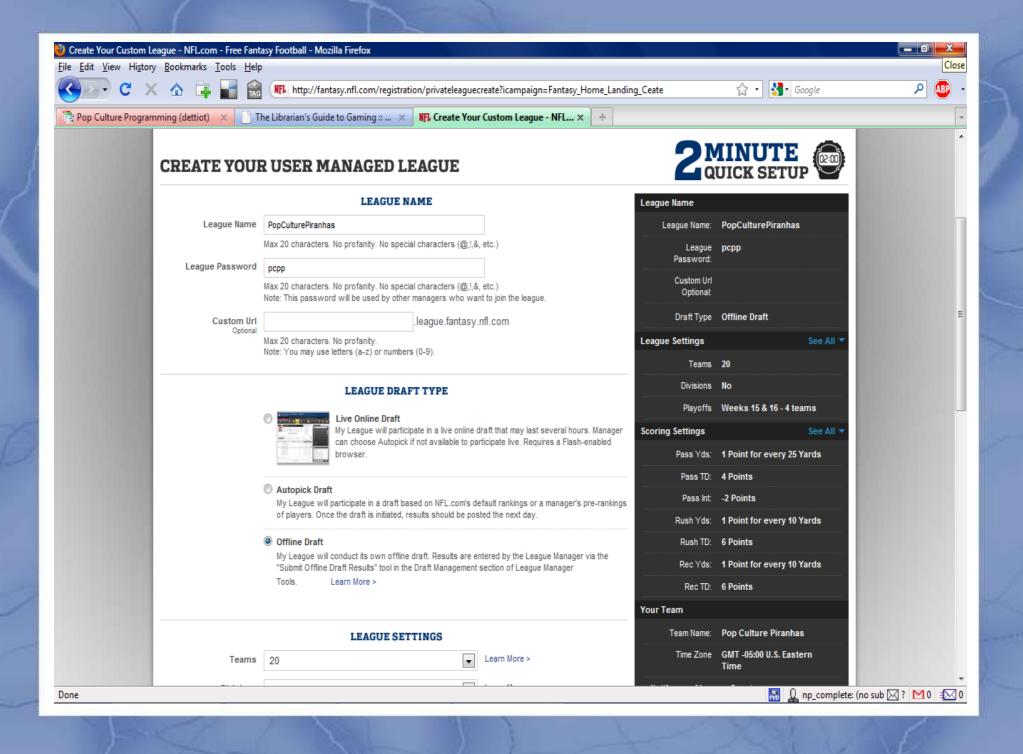
#### How to Start

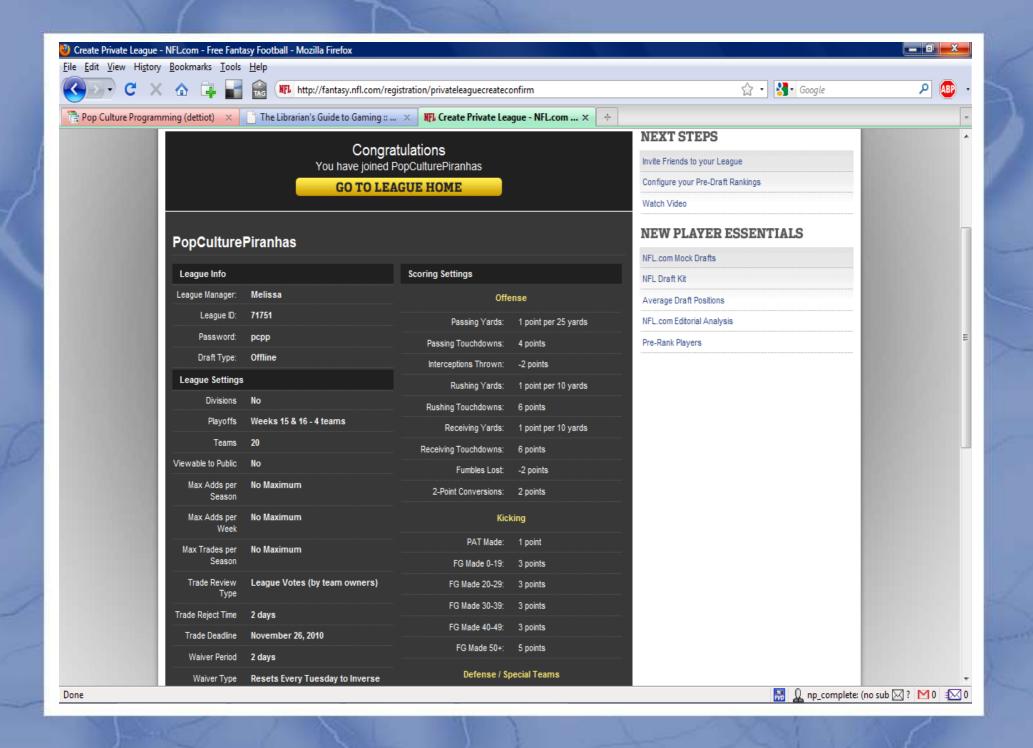
- Select an online home for your league.
  - Yahoo! Fantasy Football
  - ESPN Fantasy
  - NFL.com Fantasy Football

#### How to Start

 Create a custom league, so that all your library's players are competing against each other.







## Fantasy Football Program

- After you set up your league, have an event for participants to meet, research players, and even hold your virtual draft.
- Each week, publicize in your library which owners have teams that are the league leaders.

## Fantasy Football Program

- At the end of the season, award prizes to the owners whose teams made the playoffs.
- You could hold a special event during the Super Bowl, awarding the prizes during half time.

## Why Fantasy Football?

- Fantasy football appeals to men, a demographic that libraries often struggle to serve.
- The game tests owners' ability to gather and analyze information and statistics: a skill often needed by students and taught by school and academic libraries.

#### Unsure?

- This would be a great opportunity to collaborate with another staff member, especially if you aren't a football expert.
- Even a custom league has default settings that you can leave in place.
- This would be a great quasi-passive program, especially if you have limited meeting room space.

# Some Sample Programs

Flash Mobs

#### What is a Flash Mob?

 "A flash mob is a large group of people who assemble suddenly in a public place, perform an unusual and pointless act for a brief time, then disperse."

"Flash Mob", Wikipedia. (Accessed August 8, 2010)

## Types of Flash Mob

- Pillow fight
- Silent disco
- Statues
- Musical number

## Flash Mobs as Library Program?

- It's probably difficult for us as librarians to support a flash mob in our libraries.
- Maybe you could arrange a flash mob in a community location, to support reading or libraries.

#### Flash Mob

- Pick a well-known spot in your community.
- Have participants bring a book to read, or pass out multiple copies of the same book.
- At a designated time, everyone pulls out their book and starts reading aloud the same passage.
- At the end, everyone recites your library's catchphrase.

#### When to Hold a Flash Mob

- During reading celebrations like Teen Read Week, Banned Books Week, or National Library Card Sign-Up Month
- To promote a One Book, One Community program
- During an election with a library referendum/bond on the ballot

#### After the Flash Mob

- Make sure you have someone with a video camera taping your flash mob.
- Put the video on YouTube or other video sites.
- Share it with your patrons and community.

### Concerns

- Is this legal?
- Will it get your message out there?

## Going Beyond the Examples

- Consult books like Pop Goes the Library or Using Pop Culture to Teach Information Literacy to learn more.
- Gain inspiration from BGSU's Browne Popular Culture Library or Syracuse's Bleier Center for Television and Popular Culture.
- Talk to your patrons!

Any questions?

## Thank you for attending!

Melissa Rabey

dettiot@gmail.com

http://bit.ly/popcultureprogramming